

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 7-17 are pending in the present application. Claim 9 has been amended. New claims 18-20 have been added. Reconsideration and reexamination of pending claims 1-5 and 7-17 and new claims 18-20 is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 112

The Examiner has rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite. Applicant has amended claim 9 to resolve the indefinite rejection.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 8-11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones et al in view of Ramachandran et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's arguments relating to these claims

Initially, the combination suggested by the Examiner does not teach, describe, or suggest the invention called out in independent claim 8, as originally presented or as now amended for greater clarity. The combination lacks at least one element of independent claim 8. For example, the Examiner's proposed combination does not teach, describe, or suggest a standardized vending machine protocol. In fact, the Examiner does not even mention the standardized vending machine protocol element when describing the combination. In light of the fact that the combination fails to teach this element of independent claim 8, the combination does not teach, describe, or suggest the claimed subject matter.

In addition, the combination suggested by the Examiner fails to teach, describe, or suggest a bill acceptor/dispenser that controls the disbursement of coins from a coin acceptor/changer. Instead, both cited references teach a central controller that controls bill and coin mechanisms separately. Neither teaches a controller that controls a bill mechanism, which in turn controls a coin mechanism as called out in independent claim 8. For these reasons, independent claim 8 is patentable over the cited combination.

With respect to the dependent claims 9-11, as they are dependent on and add further limitations to an allowable base claim, they themselves are believed to be allowable.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5, 7, and 12-17 as under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Jones et al in view of Ramachandran and further in view of Katou et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's arguments relating to these claims.

The combination suggested by the Examiner does not teach, describe, or suggest the invention of independent claims 1 and 7 as presented because the proposed combination lacks at least one element of each of these independent claims. Both of independent claims 1 and 7 include the element of a standard vending machine protocol. As noted above, the Examiner fails to reference where in the combination this element is taught, described, or suggested. In fact, the element is not found in the combination and independent claims 1 and 7 are thus allowable over the cited art.

In addition, with respect to claim 1, the cited references do not teach, describe, or suggest a bill acceptor/dispenser that controls the disbursement of coins from a coin acceptor/changer. Instead, the cited references teach a central controller that controls bill and coin mechanisms separately. Neither teaches a controller that controls a bill mechanism, which in turn controls a coin mechanism as called out in independent claim 1. For these reasons, independent claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination.

The Examiner has failed to give specific reasons for rejecting dependent claims 2-5. These dependent claims add additional limitations not taught or described in the references identified or the combination suggested by the Examiner. For this reason, dependent claims 2-5 are patentable over the cited combination. Additionally, the rejected dependent claims, as they are dependent on and add further limitations to an allowable base claim, are themselves allowable.

With respect to dependent claims 12-17, the Examiner repeats his arguments with respect to dependent claims 9-11. As dependent claims 12-17 are dependent on, and add limitations to, allowable base claims, it is believed that they are themselves allowable.

New Claims 18-20 included additional limitations not found in the cited combination and are themselves allowable. For example, with respect to claim 18, the Examiner's proposed combination does not teach, describe, or suggest a standardized vending machine protocol, which includes a program only allowing acceptance of notes up to a first value. The references also do not address a Control Program for accepting notes of higher denominations, i.e. notes up to a second value that is greater than the first value which can be accommodated by a standardized vending machine protocol. Further, there is no teaching, description, or suggestion in the combination cited by the Examiner to store selected notes in a dispensable fashion for change in a vending machine transaction and storing all other notes in a non-dispensable fashion. For these reasons, independent claim 18 is patentable over the cited combination.

With respect to claim 19, the references either alone or in combination lack a note hopper and program to calculate change to be dispensed from the note hopper and from the coin acceptor/changer. Therefore claim 19 is patentable over the cited combination.

With respect to claim 20, the references either alone or in combination lack a note hopper that makes change in a vending machine transaction as called out in claim 20 and lacks a vending machine having a standard protocol program limited to accepting denominations of notes only up to threshold level, e.g. a first value, and a processor controlling the acceptance and recognition of notes up to a second value exceeding the first value. Therefore claim 20 is patentable over the cited art.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request that this application be reviewed and that the claims, as amended, be allowed.

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Respectfully submitted,

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